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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/864,423	05/23/2001	Michael Bourbeau		3867

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EXAMINER

NGUYEN, CHI Q

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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3637

DATE MAILED: 01/15/2003

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/864,423

Applicant(s)

BOURBEAU, MICHAEL

Examiner

Chi Q Nguyen

Art Unit

3637

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 03 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 24 October 2002.
- 2a) ☐ This action is FINAL. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-8 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-8 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- 11) ☒ The proposed drawing correction filed on 24 October 2002 is: a) ☒ approved b) ☐ disapproved by the Examiner.
If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.
- 12) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

- 13) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 14) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).
a) ☐ The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 15) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☐ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). _____
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) 3. 6) ☐ Other:

DETAILED ACTION

The receipt of drawing correction is acknowledged and approval by examiner.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

1. The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

2. Regarding claims 1, 2, 5, 6, the phrase "would be" renders the claims indefinite because it is unclear whether the limitations following the phrase are part of the claimed invention. See MPEP § 2173.05(d).

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

3. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

4. Claims 1-8 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Goodrich (US 5,311,713) in view of Fayle (US 6,176,062).

Goodrich discloses a pole protector comprising a cover 15 having a length, a width, first, second sides, first, second edges, thickness 1/16"-1/8", fabricated from flexible plastic or any suitable plastic may be used, being wrapped around column 34, removably fastener means are hook-and-loop disposed at the edges 30 and 32 of the first section 12 and the second section 14. (See figs. 1-2, cols. 2-3).

Goodrich does not disclose expressly and specifically the cover being fabricated from a dense foam material and having a thickness of at least $\frac{1}{2}$ ", the length would be approximately 8' and the width would be approximately 11.5".

Fayle teaches pole protector comprising a pole 10, a cover/protector 20 having inner shell 22 composed of a foam material (col. 2, line 18), and a thickness of $\frac{1}{4}$ in. or other suitable thickness providing the desired impact-absorption capacity (col. 2, line 37), a length 2-6'. The thickness ranges disclosed in both Goodrich and Fayle show that it is an engineering design to select a thickness such that it provides a desired impact-absorption capacity. The $\frac{1}{2}$ " thickness certainly falls within the thickness range taught by Fayle.

At the time of the invention, it would have been obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art to combine Goodrich's disclosure with Fayle's for the protector 20 having inner shell 22 composed of a foam material and the thickness of at least $\frac{1}{2}$ ". The motivation for doing so would have been to provide better impact-absorbing capability.

With regards to claims 2 and 6, Goodrich and Fayle teach the structural elements for the pole protector except for the length about 8' and the width about 11.5". It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to optimize the desirable length and width depending on the particular application requirements, since it has been held that where the general conditions of a claim are disclosed in the prior art, discovering the optimum or working ranges involves only routine skill in the art.


Response to Arguments

5. Applicant's arguments with respect to claims 1-8 have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.

Conclusion

6. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Chi Q. Nguyen whose telephone number is (703) 605-1224, Monday-Thursday (7:00-5:30), Fridays off or examiner's supervisor, Lanna Mai can be reached at (703) 308-2486. The fax number for the organization where this application or proceeding assigned are (703) 872-9326 for regular communications and (703) 872-9327 for After Final communications.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is (703) 308-1113.


CQN
1/6/03

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